

Faith and Inspiration

God’s Little Half-Truth

Let me set you the scene. It's the nation of Israel during the reign of its first king. On the road to Bethlehem, the sun cuts sweat off the foreheads of those walking a dirt path, leaving palms and pits damp. Most complain about the sultry conditions, but not Samuel. For Samuel, it's a blessing to disguise his nervousness.

See him there, Samuel, gripping the strap of his traveler's pack too tightly. Being a prophet no easy task, he's got bags on his shoulders and bags under his eyes, evidence of sleepless nights getting called by God and still other nights mourning his country and his king. But God made his choice. Samuel had too. He walks alongside a cow and pats her flank when a passerby asks him of his journey. "Just a bit of worshipping," Samuel says. "Got to make a sacrifice."

He says it with a straight face, no haste, no flinch. It's the truth. Not the whole truth.

Maybe not even the real truth since the point of Samuel's journey is to anoint a new king while Saul still sits on the throne. The sacrifice is somewhat of an afterthought, an extra command God gave after Samuel protested the absurdity of his directions. Reject Saul? Anoint one of Jesse's sons? Akin to suicide.

If Saul finds out, Samuel's life is forfeit, and Samuel has a lot more living he wants to do. Surely God has more to the plan than just go and do.

God does. It's a covert mission. Don't say it's about anointing, declaring the end of Saul's dynasty before it has hardly begun. Say it's about a sacrifice. Samuel will worship while he is in Bethlehem,

he'll have his feast and prayer. Jesse will happen to be invited, Samuel will happen to see a chosen son, and none of that will be broadcast. Though Saul may ask to know of Samuel's whereabouts, may inquire on the point of his little journey, Samuel can point at the cow and say, "Just a bit of worshipping." By leaving out other details, Samuel is in the clear.

For most of my life, I have heard that when God says, "Do not lie," what he means is, "Speak the truth." The whole truth. Not a partial truth, no manipulative half-truth, but the whole truth, come what may,

be in contradiction to the "do not lie" missive, the command to speak the truth no matter the consequences.

But rather than assume that we've caught God in something of a lie or double standard, it seems far more plausible to me to assume that the flaw is on our part, not his. It may be that our ideas of truth and lies are far too simplified. The reality of being honest, of speaking the truth in love, is more complex than our teachings imply.

If that is the case, then I say let's be open to a more complete understanding of what honesty truly entails. Perhaps there is a time and place for those half-truths, those manipulations that highlight different facets of reality. Maybe all we need to say is that there's a feast. We don't always have to go into the specifics of who's invited and why.

Again, remember that a more "complete understanding" does not trump love. The truth, our speaking of the truth, is not a knife. It's a scalpel. It's not a barb and venom, but a needle and suture. A partial truth is not an excuse to attack or harm through omission. We must be careful to continue edifying the body and bringing justice even if we don't speak the whole truth at all times.

But then, the other side of that coin is how love sometimes means harm now to bring healing later. The needle will sting going into the body, but the pain is necessary. It's like Nineveh being told that they would be destroyed for their wickedness. A painful truth, one that brought much mourning and terror. But after that dark storm came renewal.

I could go further, I could question when is full truth appropriate, when should we cause harm, when should we keep silence; but I believe that would muddy my point more than illuminate it. There is still a lot to discuss and discover when it comes to the proper conduct of a life that pleases God. May this article be a step in that journey, a thought to spark yet more thoughts on the road to perfection.



Luke Marshburn
Homestead Mennonite Church



no matter the consequences. The one caveat is to speak the truth in love, but that is to make sure that truth is not a cudgel to bludgeon those around the speaker. It is to make sure that truth builds up and heals rather than tears down and harms.

And then there's 1 Samuel 16. There, God himself acknowledges that the whole, blunt truth may do more harm than good. Rather than risk his life and the life of the future king, Samuel is told to withhold some specifics of his journey, and in doing so, he ensures that there will be less chance of interference from an irate Saul.

Samuel didn't lie. He also didn't speak the whole truth. What does that mean for us? This appears to

Feds Push Back in Florida Drug Importation Case

By Jim Saunders, NSF

The Biden administration this week asked a judge to reject allegations that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has “dragged its feet” on a Florida proposal to import prescription drugs from Canada and has not properly complied with a public-records request.

U.S. Department of Justice attorneys filed a 27-page document that pushed back against a lawsuit the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration filed in August to try to spur a decision on the importation proposal and to obtain a series of records.

Gov. Ron DeSantis and then-Florida House Speaker Jose Oliva, R-Miami Lakes, made the drug-importation issue a priority in 2019, with lawmakers approving a plan to make imported drugs available in government programs such as Medicaid, the prison system and facilities run run by the Department of Children and Families. At least initially, the state wants to import drugs to treat conditions such as HIV and AIDS, hepatitis C, diabetes and mental illness, according to the lawsuit.

The state submitted a proposal in November 2020 to the FDA, which would need to approve the importation program. The FDA said in the filing Monday that it has not provided a timeline for deciding on Florida’s proposal and that “there is no express statutory deadline for authorizing SIP proposals.”

Former President Donald Trump’s administration approved a rule in 2020 to help clear the way for drug imports, but groups including the Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers of America launched a legal challenge that remains unresolved in federal court in Washington.

In its lawsuit, the Agency for Health Care Administration said Florida’s effort to move forward with an importation program “is stuck in the starting blocks.” The lawsuit also said it is “telling that the FDA has dragged its feet for so long” despite widespread public support for importing cheaper prescription drugs.

The state’s lawyers wrote that “it seems the most likely explanation for the FDA’s delay, in the face of near universal support for importation programs, is the FDA’s longstanding symbiotic relationship with big pharmaceutical companies that stand to lose hundreds of millions of dollars if Florida’s SIP proposal is approved.”

The lawsuit contends the FDA is violating a law known as the Administrative Procedure Act and seeks an order forcing the FDA to immediately review and decide on the proposal. Also, the state is seeking a declaration that the FDA violated the Freedom of Information Act when it did not provide records requested July 6 by Agency for Health Care Administration Secretary Simone Marsteller.

The answer filed Monday, however, said the state is not “entitled to compel the production of records exempt from disclosure by one or more of the exemptions to the FOIA”

The case has been assigned to U.S. District Judge Thomas Barber, named to the bench by Trump.

Are You Eligible for SSI



Securing today and tomorrow

Question: Who is eligible for SSI? U. Moncada, Hialeah

Answer: Anyone may apply for SSI. The SSI program provides monthly payments to people who:

- Are at least age 65 or blind or disabled.
- Have limited income (wages, pensions, etc.).
- Have limited resources (the things you own).
- Are U.S. citizens, nationals of the U.S., or some noncitizens.
- Reside in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, or the Northern Mariana Islands. Exception: The children of military parent(s) assigned to permanent duty outside the U.S. and certain students temporarily abroad may receive SSI payments outside the U.S.

Question: Who funds the SSI Benefits? F. Morris, Deerfield Beach

Answer: SSI is financed by general funds of the U.S. Treasury--personal income taxes, corporate and other taxes. Social Security taxes collected under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) or the Self-Employment Contributions Act (SECA) do not fund the SSI program.

Question: When did Medicare began? F. Donald, Wilton Manors

Answer: Medicare was passed into law on July 30, 1965 but beneficiaries were first able to sign-up for the program on July 1, 1966.

Question: I am a divorced person and I haven’t worked full time. Am I going to be able

to get Social Security? J. Ackerman, Royal Palm

Answer: If you were married at least 10 years you will be eligible for Social Security based on your ex-spouse’s earnings record. Your receiving a benefit will have no impact on the benefit your ex is eligible for. There are a few caveats to understand about how this works. Most important, you can’t make a claim on an ex-spouse’s record if you remarry. (It doesn’t matter if your ex remarried.) You also need to be at least 62 years old.

Question: I would like to have a comfortable retirement; how much money will I need? M. Mesa, Homestead

Answer: Anticipate what your expenses will be in retirement, including things like mortgage payments or rent, utilities, healthcare insurance and related costs, food, personal care, car payments and maintenance, entertainment, hobbies, travel, and credit card or other debt. Also, consider whether you’ll need to provide for your spouse, children, or grandchildren.



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CANES from 1B

scoring with 18, going 6-9 from the floor including 3-4 from deep. Lola Pendande and Ja’Leah Williams each added 14 and Destiny Harden had 12. All 10 LadyCanes that played had at least one rebound and nine scored.

On Sunday, Nov.13, Boston University were the visitors and it was more of the same. The Terriers never led and Miami was up as many as 45 before it ended UM 81- BU 46. Ten LadyCanes rebounded and nine scored on Sunday. University of Texas transfer Tasha Lattimore led the way with 25 and 10 boards, her first Miami double-double. Destiny Harden had 14 and Lazaria “Z” Spearman added 10 and 8 rebounds.

The LadyCanes look very strong this year. Next up is Florida Atlantic at home, then off to Chicago, Destiny Harden’s hometown, to face De Paul and Loyola of Chicago.

The Men’s team, like the LadyCanes, has followed a script in their first two games but the scripts have not been similar. The LadyCanes have led from the get go in their three wins but the Men have been sluggish and trailed at halftime against both Lafayette last week and UNC- Greensboro last Friday night.

Miami was down 34-33 against the visiting Spartan’s before 10-17 (58.8%) shooting from the three point line in the second half paved the way for a 79-65 victory.

Five Canes scored at least nine points. Jordan Miller led with 19 on 8-12 shooting. Zay Wong had 15 and Nijel Pack 14. Both Wooga Poplar and Harlond Beverly had nine, Harlond’s on 3-4 from deep. Norchad Omier led with 11 boards.

My deadline for Canes Corner is Wednesday morning. I’ll be leaving for the UM- Florida A&M game momentarily and

be updating and finishing Canes Corner late tonight.....I’m back!

In a very entertaining game the Hurricanes improved to 3-0 and Coach Jim Larranaga notched his 699th career victory. The FAMU Rattlers played even with the Canes for the first six or seven minutes before Norchad Omier scored six straight points in 55 seconds that spurred Miami to score 22 of the last 32 first half points and take a 41-27 lead at the break.

Omier hit his first seven shots of the night, was 10-12 for the game, scored 21 and had 7 boards, 3 steals, 2 assists and 2 blocks in the 87-61 win.

Jordan Miller had 19 on 8-11 shooting with 7 rebounds and 3 steals. Sophomores Wooga Poplar and Bensley Joseph both scored career highs. Wooga had 15 on 7-11 from the floor. Bensley added 12 on 4-6 shooting including 3-4 from beyond the arc. Isaiah Wong grabbed 6 off the glass and dished out a career high 7 dimes. The team shot 35-66 (53.0%), scored 25 off turnovers, 50 in the paint and had 23 fast break points.

Three Canes made their collegiate debuts. True freshmen Christian Watson and Favour Aire joined redshirt freshman Jakai Robinson in opening appearances. Freshman AJ Casey was 2-2 including a three pointer in his second appearance. It was a great night for all.

This weekend Miami will travel to the Mohegan Sun Arena in Uncasville, Connecticut where they will play Saturday and Sunday in the Naismith Hall of Fame Tipoff Classic.

The Canes face the Providence Friars at 4:00 on Saturday (ESPN News Network). The Maryland Terrapins play the St. Louis Billikens in the Classic opener at 1:00 pm. The winners play Sunday at 1:00 pm on ESPN. The third place game will be at 3:30 pm Sunday on ESPNU.

Happy Thanksgiving to all and Go Canes!

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